

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

My dear readers of Journal of Extension Education,

The general complaint which we keep hearing is that the performance of public extension services in developing countries such as India, has not been satisfactory. Demand-driven public extension services are hardly in practice today. They have difficulty in facing the growing challenges of the agricultural sector such as globalization-induced competitiveness and ecological threats. Private extension, earlier thought of as a viable alternative to public extension has not been much promising either. Major reforms in the public extension system are therefore essential for enhancing its effectiveness. In one of its Policy briefs, the NCAP (ICAR-National Institute of Agricultural Economics and Policy Research) had suggested that to be effective and to remain relevant in the years to come, the public extension agencies in India should initiate the following structural reforms in the organization.

- Strengthen understanding on matters with respect to technology, markets, prices, demand and policies by hiring or recruiting professionals in these important areas.
- *Recruit better qualified staff* - Among the 1,10,000-odd agricultural extension staff in the states, only around 20 percent are agricultural graduates.
- *Improve social science skills* of extension personnel with respect to need assessment, group formation, negotiation, conflict resolution, mobilization, management of CPRs, use of IT, data collection, analysis and documentation
- *Increase the allocation* for operational expenditure: Allocation of operating expenses in State Departments of Agriculture in the country is around 15% whereas a fully functional extension system should have 30-35% of its total expenses as operational expenses.
- *Decentralize* the operations of the department and provide flexibility to field level officers to decide appropriate extension programmes.
- *Improve the capabilities* of extension managers to operate effectively in the pluralistic extension environment.

As public-sector extension system continues to be the predominant extension provider in the country, it needs to refine its roles in line with the reforms mentioned above.

I am happy to inform that JEE is now indexed/listed in Google Scholar, J-Gate, CIARD-RING of GFAR and MIAR (Information Matrix for analysis of Journals). The journal is under review in several other agencies. This issue of JEE has an interesting mix of topics ranging from learning styles of agricultural students to work participation of tribals to farmer interest groups. Do give your feedback to editorextension@gmail.com.